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On Other Pages

ENTS .. 2

FROM DELHI
'ANA DITHERS
OM A POLITICAL CORRES-
'ONDENT .. 5

TTA DIARY
ARAN GUPTA .. 6

TEACHERS ON WAR
H?
IKANTA SHUKLA .. 8

S NOT FOR BURNING
M A CORRESPONDENT .. 8

OMPRADOR AND HIS
TAL
H'S .. 9

RESS
TS OF HARYANA .. 14

SHEVCHENKO
A DRAMA CRITIC .. 16

PTY CANVAS
BODH KUMAR MAITRA .. 16

EXHIBITIONS
AN ART CRITIC .. 17

RS .. 18

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DEATH OF A BLUFF

THE people of Haryana have been fooled by the Congress once again. Refusing to learn from their experience after the last general election they allowed themselves to be swayed by the Congress propaganda that of all the parties, it alone could give the State a stable Ministry. A screening of sorts was staged to select defection-proof candidates as if the party abounds in men of incorrodible integrity. The ruse worked, and in the mid-term poll in May a fuddled electorate voted back the Congress to power with a majority sufficient to see it through till the next general election. History has now started repeating itself in all its sordid details, and the seven-month old Congress Ministry in the State is tottering. Mr Bhugwat Dayal Sharma is paying back the leaders of his erstwhile party in their own coin, for it was the present leadership of the Congress which had launched a policy of subverting the United Front ministries by playing on the avarice of unprincipled legislators. When some of the UF ministries were in trouble as a result of this policy the Prime Minister had said with a mixed air of injured innocence and ridicule that the Congress had nothing to do with it and the UF ministries were crumbling under the weight of their unity. The Fronts were in most cases emergency amalgams of disparate parties and groups, and it should have been a miracle if they were able to hold together for long against the Congress onslaught. There is no such saving grace for the Congress Ministry in Haryana. It is going to pieces because of the dry rot in the party.

Elated at the victory of their party at the mid-term poll in Haryana, the Congress leaders had complimented themselves on their show of sternness towardst he defectors. The anticlimax in Haryana has neither sobered nor shamed them, as is evident from Mr Morarji Desai's glib talk at elections meetings in this State. Desperate attempts are being made to keep the Bansi Lal Ministry in office, and eating all their brave words about disciplining the defectors, the Congress leaders are trying to woo Mr Sharma's followers back to the party. They have authorised Mr Bansi Lal to expand his Ministry clearly for the purpose of accommodating as many defectors as possible. Much is being sought to be made of Mr Sharma's expulsion from the party, but his associates have not been touched so that there may be no bar to their return to the fold. This open-door policy towards the defectors has been supplemented by Mr Bansi Lal

with a threat that he might recommend dissolution of the Assembly. A callow Chief Minister like him would not have dared to talk of such a drastic measure unless advised by his leaders in New Delhi. A similar bluff was tried in Madhya Pradesh last year but it did not work. There is no reason to take such threats seriously, for the Congress is no less scared of facing the electorate than other parties. Mr Bansi Lal was merely trying to bully the deserters and his depleted herd.

More unscrupulous has been the way the Governor of the State, a former civilian, is being made to play the Congress game. He is not, however, a new hand in this matter, for it is he who had recommended the dissolution of the Haryana Assembly last year when the UF Ministry had a slender majority because he was sick of the almost hourly ratting. The present situation in Haryana does not seem to be any different except that it is a Congress Ministry which is in trouble. That has been enough for the Governor : he refuses to be bothered by numbers and goes by what the Congress Chief Minister says. So great is his reliance on Mr Bansi Lal that he does not think an early trial of strength in the Assembly is necessary to decide the rival claims of the Congress and the newly formed United Front. The Chief Minister has set his face against an early session, and the Governor sees no harm in the uncertainty continuing till the Assembly meets, as scheduled, towards the end of January. In a similar situation last year, another Governor, he too a former civilian, had thought differently. Mr Dharma Vira could not wait for three weeks for the West Bengal Assembly to meet and dismissed the UF Ministry in West Bengal peremptorily, because on the strength of certain scraps of paper he was satisfied that the Ministry had lost its legislative majority. It seems the powers and duties of Governors vary not merely from State to State but also from time to time in accordance with the needs of the Congress party ; they have become willing tools of the power game of the Congress, or maybe they are only fulfilling their contractual obligations. By such manipulations the Congress is only hastening the process of disillusionment with the type of democracy it prescribed for the country.

Congress Campaign

Mr Morarji Desai, it appears, came to Calcutta both as Deputy Prime Minister and as a senior Congress leader. Such a combination of official and political roles may sometimes be inescapable, but is better avoided on the eve of elections. Men like Mr Desai make little effort to keep the two identities separate and do not seem averse to using their official position for party purposes. Mr Desai knew that his main engagements in Calcutta were official; yet he did not hesitate to utilise it for Congress electioneering as well. If he had come for electioneering alone, people could have treated the visit as it shou[illegible] been. One consequence of the [illegible]ination of two roles was that n[illegible] only sections of the general public but also newspaper reporters (who should know better) seemed to treat Mr Desai's election speeches as pronouncements by the country's Deputy Prime Minister. In fact, Mr Desai himself blurred the distinction by saying at election meetings things that he was entitled to say only as Deputy Prime Minister; for example, his observations about the Centre's policy towards Kerala.

There is also the small matter of expenses. In view of his official engagements, the Deputy Prime Minister's trip was presumably financed by the Government. He travelled by an IAF plane, stayed at Raj Bhavan, was accompanied by officials from Delhi, and—so far as is known—used official transport to keep both his official and political engagements in the city. If this is not misuse of public funds, what is ? We may, of course, be misinformed. The Congress party may, though we doubt it, have paid, or arranged to pay, the Government the part of the expenses incurred in connection with Mr Desai's [illegible] aid of the party. If so, let the G[illegible]ment make this public, and in [illegible]cing detail. Until this is don[illegible] public will be entitled to the bel[illegible] public resources have been imp[illegible] used. Besides, how does one [illegible] the expenses of a combined [illegible] Which part, and how large a p[illegible] the air journey should be regar[illegible] having been for party work ? [illegible] many meals did the Deputy [illegible] Minister eat in his official capaci[illegible] how many did Mr Desai need [illegible]tain his strength for addressing [illegible] two election meetings in a day ? [illegible] is not exactly levity; it invo[illegible] point of principle which tends [illegible] ignored by a senior Minister o[illegible] this country.

Obviously, Congress leaders li[illegible] Desai have no time for such n[illegible] they must save West Bengal f[illegible] Congress, howsoever dubious [illegible] means that might be necessary. [illegible] meeting on Saturday a few miles [illegible] Calcutta, Mr Atulya Ghosh sai[illegible] the Congress did not want vo[illegible] abusing other parties and pro[illegible] went on speaking of "a reign of [illegible] and disorder" let loose by part[illegible] the United Front. Mr Desai, wh[illegible] speaking in Calcutta on the same [illegible] was of course far more abusive [illegible] accused the two communist part[illegible] owing allegiance to Russia and [illegible] described the leftists as "vio[illegible] democratic and subversive", n[illegible] slanderous personal attack a[illegible] Mr Ajoy Mukherjee, and, as [illegible] came to listen to his speech, aske[illegible] people not to be afraid of the [illegible] since there were forces in the [illegible] much more harmful.

And, of course, much is being [illegible] of the allegedly violent tactics em[illegible]ed by the United Front and its [illegible]porters. The United Front has al[illegible] given its reply to one of its oppo[illegible] hurt in a cracker explosion in M[illegible]pore: that it does not believe in [illegible]lence even against traitors. A[illegible] Congress leaders, it was reported [illegible] weekend, had received a few s[illegible] after a meeting in Burdwan. W[illegible] ever such incidents occur, there s[illegible] to be no hesitation in holding the [illegible]tists responsible. Everybody k[illegible]

[illegible] may it is to stage-manage such [illegible] for propaganda purposes [illegible] United Front can legitimate- [illegible] that few voices are raised [illegible] violence directed against its [illegible] by identifiable elements [illegible] opponents. A young man, [illegible] to be a supporter of the CPI(M), [illegible] killed in the Baranagore area [illegible] day Mr P. C. Sen and some [illegible] received a few brickbats. Some- [illegible], a CPI(M) worker, pasting [illegible] poster in Entally, was [illegible] to death, and many other [illegible] right-wing violence have [illegible] not been reported.

Midnapore Cracker

[illegible] correspondent writes:

[illegible] had that Mr Humayun Kabir [illegible] hit in the jaw by a cracker at [illegible] meeting. We hope that [illegible] will soon be able to resume his [illegible] and count the election seats [illegible] they are hatched. After all, [illegible] must be some political sooth- [illegible] for big businessmen, and at the [illegible] Mr Kabir is the hero of their [illegible]. The pity of it all is that Mr [illegible], who imagines himself to be [illegible] Joe McCarthy, has neither [illegible] nor the resources to be [illegible] as the American. Think [illegible] record: Congressman, Indepen- [illegible] after his ouster from the Union [illegible], Bangla Congress, BKD, [illegible], Lok Dal—it is a large litter, [illegible] to beget confidence. Mr Kabir [illegible] politics almost to a game [illegible] and-making.

[illegible] genuine sympathy for the [illegible] Mr Kabir would have been [illegible] but for the way he has [illegible] talking his head off. In a pre- [illegible] statement in the hospital he [illegible] that he had wanted the Gov- [illegible] to arrest Mr Jyoti Basu and [illegible] Ajoy Mukherjee before McNamara [illegible] in town, because it is these [illegible] who are behind the hooli- [illegible]. The hooligans themselves are [illegible] tools.

[illegible] is not the language of one who [illegible] to be the saviour of West Ben- [illegible] but of one who would not mind if nastier incidents occur if these gain him a few more seats in the mid-term elections.

There have been at least 20 political murders of late in West Bengal, and the number of people killed by the police in this country in the past few months is not inconsiderable. But to people like Mr Kabir, while violence from the Left is a crime, violence of the Right is always righteous. The fighting kisan is a sinner, the murderous jotedar a saint. Why was it that Mr Kabir did not condemn the brutal police attack on those who had just ceased to be ministers in November last year? Now that Mr Kabir knows where the splinter hurts, he should be more compassionate about other victims of worse violence.

Mr Kabir is obsessed with the ballot-box. But what sort of democracy have elections produced in this country? Think of what is happening in Haryana at the moment, of what has happened all over the country since the last general election. To this sickening sequence Mr Kabir has also been a party. It can be taken for granted that if his Lok Dal gangs up with a hypothetically victorious Congress in February, the bliss will be short-lived and the game of defections resumed. Five LD members may be O.K. But if ten or more candidates win, there will be trouble unless all of them are included in the Cabinet. We know the stuff these devotees of democracy are made of.

Bitter Sugar

The International Sugar Agreement recently signed under the auspices of the UNCTAD, has fixed the export price of the commodity at 58 paise per kilogram. If one shops around in the London market, sugar can be obtained at 40 paise, and if American wrath can be dared, the sweetening agent can be imported from Cuba at only 30 paise. In contrast, the market price here is close to Rs. 4.00 per kilogram; in other words, the price which our consumers are being called upon to pay is ten times the price of sugar in the London market, and about thirteen times the price in Cuba.

What a topsy-turvy situation this is, with high-income countries paying low prices, and Indians, who have perhaps the lowest per capita income in the world, paying the highest price for a near-essential article. It will be idle to pretend that this high price is being determined by either the cost of production or the free forces of supply and demand. If, for example, factories are allowed to move down South, where both the yield per acre and the sucrose content of the cane are high, a reduction in the per unit cost of sugar would immediately take place. To claim that such a shift would throw out of employment hundreds of thousands of cane workers in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar is a plain exaggeration. As cane production shrinks, there should be scope in these States for crossing over to alternative crops, including foodgrains. Given the spiralling of foodgrain prices in recent years, it would have been in the nature of things if acreage had shifted in this manner towards paddy and other food crops at the expense of cane. Official price policy, however, has been precisely to forestall any such possibility: efforts have been directed to adjust the minimum price of sugarcane so as to maintain the competitiveness of cane cultivation vis-a-vis other crops, at each point of time, in all the States. Consequently, cane and, therefore, sugar pricing has been the victim of two separate irrationalities: first, the price has been set in relation to the level of cost of the least efficient unit; scond, this price has been continuously tinkered with to keep pace with the price of foodgrains.

Scarcely any rhyme or reason inheres to policy decisions, such as these. At least in foodgrains, particularly rice, there is a worldwide shortage; in sugar it is exactly the opposite. If only the Government would agree to import a couple of hundred thousand tonnes of sugar each year—or even emit the threat to make such imports—internal prices will start to tumble. This could also encourage the sugar industry—the State Governments permitting—to

shift towards high-productivity regions like Maharashtra and Mysore. Importing two hundred thousand tonnes of sugar will involvle barely Rs. 2 crores worth of foreign exchange, but the saving for the consumers will easily amount to Rs. 50 crores.

The regime in New Delhi does not however think in terms of imports : it has to worry about the election kitty, and about lining the pockets of the near and dear ones. In one of those breath-taking demonstrations of perverse logic, it is planning to export sugar to the extent of three hundred thousand tonnes annually. The export will of course be possible only through heavy subsidies, possibly amounting to Rs. 7 or 8 crores each year.

This is a scandalous situation ; a Government which propounds and executes this type of policy deserves to be liquidated in no time. But India being India, there is hardly a ripple of protest; not only that, sugar manufacturers as well as rich cane-growers have the audacity to ask for a still higher price, which, betwixt this instant and tomorrow, might even be conceded to them. After all, the Congress will have to fight the mid-term elections in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

Russians In Nigeria

Thanks to the Russo-British cooperation, the Federal Government of Nigeria has been wholly successful in blockading Biafra. So much so that Oxfam reports that by January carbohydrates will disappear from Biafra. Proteins have already gone. The people have eaten up all the yams seeds supply and so there is no prospect of a harvest next year. *The Observer* said that 2 lakh people in Biafra had died in October, 3 lakh in November and five lakh would die in December. At the present rate of decimation, Colonel Gowon can reasonably expect to finish the business before 1971, for the population of Biafra is 7 million. Or even earlier considering the galloping rate of death. But Mr Wilson thinks that helping Nigeria with arms was the only humane way to end the civil war. The Soviet Union seems to have concurred.

Before July 6, 1967 the day the civil war started, the Russians used to be called by the Nigerian radio their worst enemies. Not so now. The Soviet Ambassador in Nigeria made a television broadcast on the Bolshevik Revolution for half an hour this year. It was the first time that any foreign national day was given importance by the Nigerian national television. The government press and broadcasting services kept absolute silence on the Russian entry into Czechoslovakia.

The Nigerians are grateful : when the U.S., having its hands full with Vietnam, refused to export weapons to Nigeria, the Soviet Union became the major arms supplier to Colonel Gowon: Mig 17, Ilyushin-28 bombers, jeeps and commando cars. Even shipful of aerial bombs, which the British felt too queasy to supply, were sent to Nigeria by the Soviet Union. Recently the Migs and Ilyushins killed civilian people in the crowded city of Umuahia.

The hitherto small Russian Embassy in Lagos is now a concrete fortress, holding 13 diplomats. Till now, there were only American and British military attaches in Nigeria; now the Soviet Union has contributed According to a captured fed soldier, Nigerian troops are trained by the Russians.

Not by arms alone. A 8-man team of economic experts we Nigeria on November 10 and co ed a bilateral economic and tec assistance agreement for a $14 lion project to construct an iron steel complex in Nigeria.

It is no mystery that the Br Government should help the Fe Government of Nigeria. British dents may protest against the supply, Oxam may demand men Biafrans, but the British Govern could not care less. It has to firm control over its erstwhile co the seeds of dissension being sow itself before it left the country. no one explains why the Soviet should back the reactionary and elements of Nigeria in preferen the bourgeoisie and working cla Biafra. Is it because support to Nigeria would boost its im the predominantly Muslim M East? The Hausa, Fulani, K and Nupe, the major tribes of ria, are Muslims. Or possibly, Kremlin thought that backing Ni would help to win the hearts of can States, to which Balkanizatio a frightening word, although no particular meaning in the co of the pluralistic cultures of Afric more possibly, the Soviet Union, banked, as did the British, on bigger numerical forces of Ni which, it hoped, would finish Bia no time. Whatever the reason, difficult to find any facade of id gical justification for the Russian to Nigeria.

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View from Delhi

Haryana Dithers

FROM A POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

WITH the latest phase of man-[illegible]ing in Haryana, a new-[illegible] Congress myth dissolves in the [illegible] dissolution of the legislature and [illegible] elections need not necessarily [illegible] defections or check political in-[illegible] where politics is just back-[illegible]. Defections are a phenomenon [illegible] Hindi belt, like the cow protec-[illegible] fad. And it is mostly a Congress [illegible]. The Prime Minister should [illegible] be happy that Mr Morarji [illegible] the Parliamentary Board mem-[illegible] in charge of Haryana under the [illegible]'s "zonal" dispensation, has [illegible] to size. Mr Desai's chela, [illegible] Bhagwat Dayal Sharma, who led [illegible], is out of the party, which [illegible] that even Gandhian plati-[illegible] of the type popularised by Mr [illegible] are no foil against the backward [illegible] of the cow country. When the [illegible] meets early in January, it is [illegible] means certain that the Bansi [illegible] Ministry would not be toppled be-[illegible] the politics of defection has an [illegible] logic all its own. If Mr [illegible] wanted to test a political [illegible] in Haryana, he must have found [illegible] the experiment has failed. A [illegible] election is at best a super-[illegible] solution to the political pande-[illegible] all the way from Chandigarh [illegible] Pune—and Delhi included, where [illegible] are so primitive.

Which raises the larger question. [illegible] the Congress keep Punjab, Uttar [illegible] or Bihar even if it wins the [illegible] polls? The leadership's ap-[illegible] to the mid-term elections has [illegible] lackadaisical that the party [illegible] the paddock with practically no [illegible] preparation. For instance, [illegible] has been done these two years to [illegible] the party? A third of the [illegible] seats in the country is at [illegible] in these States and about 40 per [illegible] of the country's electorate is in-[illegible]. Finances are still a big prob-[illegible]. But the latest party directive that individual leaders who collect funds should make them over to the party would only encourage the leaders to collect the funds and not to disclose them to the party at all.

The Government leadership's only concern now appears to be the fancied Naxalite revolts in several parts of the country. What is significant is that the same set of bureaucrats in the Home Ministry who psyched Mr G. L. Nanda into ordering a mass round up of the Left Communists in 1964 are planning the policy still. Last week, the Home Secretary, Mr L. P. Singh, wrote to the governments of Assam, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh alerting them about possible Wynad-type attacks on police stations in the months to come in these States.

The Home Secretary's letter is in short a time-table of the projected upheavals in various Naxalite pockets in these States—where and when a raid could be expected. The communication makes hardly any distinction between the amateurish Kerala raids and the clashes that might result in the context of a genuine agrarian unrest. Secondly, the communication makes it appear that it is the Centre's policy to attribute any organised peasant movement in the country to the political leadership of the Naxalites. The Centre's communication would only encourage some of the State governments to adopt this easy recourse to cover up other things. For instance, the attack on a bus in a tribal tract in Andhra Pradesh, first attributed to Naxalite Girijans, has turned out to be a clash between two Congress factions in the area.

One is struck by the obvious difference between what Mr Chavan has been saying in Parliament and what the minions in his Ministry seem to have taken for granted. The Home Minister would not presume that the Kerala raids had anything to do with the call of the All India Co-ordinating Committee of Communist Revolutionaries which met in Calcutta in October. But his Ministry's letter to the States suggests that the silly adventures in Kerala were part of the Naxalite movement in the country.

Looking back on the Kerala incidents, one is struck by the obvious absurdities about them. Ajitha was paraded by the police as though she was an exhibit. And Mr Kunnikal Narayanan has been presented to the Press after his arrest to proclaim to the world that the world's one and only genuine revolution has failed and that he was a Maoist. The Criminal Procedure Code does not permit this kind of absurdity.

On the whole the Centre is in a fairly comfortable position at the moment. There is no prospect of the long-awaited Cabinet reshuffle until the Nagercoil by-election next month. Mr Kamaraj is the Syndicate's favourite for inclusion in the Central Cabinet, if he wins the by-election. It should be a marginal victory, even if he makes it, thanks to the triangular contest. But the Centre seems to be miscalculating things in Madras State. For instance, it thinks the DMK's stand on the language issue has softened considerably. Nothing has been done to equalise the language burden the Language Policy Resolution imposes on the non-Hindi people. On the use of Hindi commands in NCC, the Centre has not relented a bit and is out to get tough with Madras and go ahead with its plans to revive NCC training in the State from the next academic year. The deadlock over the three-language formula continues. In All India Radio, English has been pushed to the background and Hindi has been installed as the super-language of the country, which is enough to offend the Tamil sentiment.

Mr Annadurai's desire to softpedal the language issue and its fairly respectable showing at the Madras City Corporation elections have given the Congress a false sense of confidence. Slick public relationing by New Delhi might have got the DMK leadership round but not its following. The student movement in Madras State on emotional issues might well overtake the DMK and even if Mr Annadurai wants it secretly, Mr Kamaraj's election to the Lok Sabha cannot be taken for granted.

DECEMBER 15, 1968

Calcutta Diary

CHARAN GUPTA

THERE are certain imperatives in the situation: Mr P. C. Sen has to say that the Congress is going to capture all the 280 seats—each one of them—in the mid-term election. Mr Sen would have been hardly Mr Sen, and the election season hardly the election season, if the claim was any less total. Nobody is being fooled. My private information is that Congress is now reconciled to having a maximum of 105 seats in the new Assembly. Surprisingly, most people who are doing the advanced calculations—including, at one end, the C.B.I. and, at the other, the United Front—, I am told, agree, more or less, with this assessment of the likely Congress performance. Views diverge only with respect to the arithmetic on the number of seats the United Front itself is going to capture: as of this week, the Front is confident of winning between 170 and 180 seats, while those who are still pinning their hopes on a Congress-INDF-Lok Dal-PSP-Bengal National Party combine to save West Bengal from the Communists and the 'Naxalites' do genuinely believe that, come February 9, the Front would somehow fall short of an absolute majority. That is also the hope of the industrialists and businessmen who have suddenly now woken up to their responsibilities towards Calcutta and its cause. This election-eve bout of conscience will of course die a natural death once the results of the poll are announced: if the Congress emerges victorious, the purpose of the ersatz moral fervour would have been amply served; if the United Front wins, the industrialists might as well start cutting their investments—and Calcutta could take the hindmost.

In the past, potentates and similar sorts have ascribed their misfortune to slow horses and fast women; in their analysis of the anticipated February debacle, Congressmen are heaping the blame on slow-moving civil servants and the fast-talking Governor. Contrary to what even the United Front had feared, the floods in North Bengal—and the consequent postponement of the poll—instead of improving the prospects for the Congress have made them immensely worse. The ineptness of the local administrators, coupled with the casual way of dealing with even grave matters in Writers' Building, has fouled up beyond redemption the party's starry-eyed plans to cash in on the goodwill of official relief operations. The rest of the debacle has been Shri Dharma Vira's very personal contribution. It had taken him six days to descend from Darjeeling to Siliguri in that grim week following the fury of the October 4-5 night; even that descent was not an autonomous movement, but was induced by the visit of Mr Morarji Desai. And the Governor has stuck to his own code of manners. He could not spare the time to meet the representatives of the Jute Workers' Union to discuss the problems faced by the 80,000 retrenched workers in the jute industry; he was "much too 'busy'" to meet the union leaders, they could leave the relevant papers behind. Busy with what? He has seemingly enough time to "inaugurate" film shows, to go to the Golf Club, to adorn cocktail occasions, to deliver glib perorations to chambers of commerce. By his disgraceful behaviour, with every day, the Governor must be making the Congress lose at least 100,000 votes. Mr Atulya Ghosh, it seems, would never put up with Mr Dharma Vira; now he has the objective reason for not being able to.

* *

So the odds are for the United Front's returning to Writers' Building. But what will it do with this victory? The thirtytwo-point programme is a *pot pourri* of generalities; if good intentions are to be translated into reality, the Front will need strong will power. It cannot afford to carry nincompoops as ministers, wh[illegible]gest that the the exigencies of intra-front [illegible]te-catching de[illegible] politics; it cannot afford to be [illegible] United Fr[illegible] to the unscrupulous and inefficie[illegible] proceed fro[illegible] of senior civil servants and polic[illegible] that does it pr[illegible] cials who are at present rolli[illegible]ense young [illegible] roast in the State; it has to hav[illegible] plinits have [illegible] courage to alienate the jotedar[illegible]endous qualit[illegible] the industrialists; it must not [illegible]ical situation? [illegible] petty jealousies in the way of [illegible] pledge from [illegible] tive power gravitating towards ge[illegible] haven go to t[illegible] ly able ministers; and it must h[illegible]rry first acts [illegible] programme of sweeping agrarian [illegible] Writers' Buildi[illegible] form which will not be bonded [illegible]anu Sanyal a[illegible] niceties of conventional law and [illegible]al prisoners w[illegible] Finally, it must not be scared of [illegible] adherents of [illegible] ing a confrontation with New D[illegible]n we have a [illegible] The trouble with the United Fr[illegible] have been [illegible] that by now it has turned into a [illegible]s under the [illegible] with many lodgings; some of the[illegible] for exch[illegible] serve to be weeded out. There wi[illegible]ill be let out [illegible] no dearth of counsel that the F[illegible]ending cases [illegible] ministry should this time hasten [illegible]nd and harve[illegible] ly, must first consolidate its po[illegible]y withdraw? [illegible] hold over the State before subs[illegible] have a stra[illegible] problems are taken on hand, for [illegible] the Unite[illegible] wise the whole thing might once [illegible]ll follow w[illegible] blow up. But this is precisely [illegible]l to the cau[illegible] mity. The whole tone of the new [illegible]ets and the [illegible] mity. The whole tone of the new [illegible] handed ou[illegible] nistration will be set by what it i[illegible]arji Desai, [illegible] to achieve during the first coupl[illegible]any? Will t[illegible] months. If it starts out by beh[illegible]ind of its pr[illegible] like a Nervous Nelly—as it did [illegible] fearless in [illegible] last time—it will never be [illegible] that woul[illegible] the opportunity to consolidate i[illegible]ould be for it [illegible] fluence: New Delhi would hem i[illegible] reactionary c[illegible] the Governor would browbeat i[illegible]entre, by the [illegible] ragamuffins of the civil service [illegible] shrill put-up [illegible] frighten it, the police would le[illegible] and the rich [illegible] astray, and the rural racketeer[illegible] year. One [illegible] urban industrialists would sweet[illegible]y Mukherje[illegible] into non-activity. Does the U[illegible] year; at l[illegible] Front have the courage to stand [illegible] chastened ma[illegible] to the hostile forces and push thro[illegible] * its minimum programme? If th[illegible] I have also a[illegible] turn out in the way it is being an[illegible] Marxist Co[illegible] pated it will get its second chance [illegible] constituent c[illegible] February. If it muffs this one too, [illegible] party has [illegible] people of the State, for all one [illegible]dherents of its [illegible] sermonise, would make up their m[illegible]tidual respon[illegible] and turn—perhaps towards a [illegible] attitude one [illegible] out direction. [illegible]ists stew in [illegible] * [illegible] party could [illegible]

It was graceful for the Front to [illegible]cts break no [illegible] mand last week that Mr Kanu Sa[illegible]al any either, [illegible] and his comrades be accorded the [illegible]ommunis's t[illegible] tus of political prisoner. Cynics m[illegible]ned 'adventur[illegible]

[illegible] that the statement is merely a [illegible]-catching device. But let me take [illegible] United Front at its face value, [illegible] proceed from there. Once in power, [illegible] does it propose to do with the [illegible] young men and women whose [illegible] have introduced such a tre[illegible] qualitative change in the po[illegible] situation? Can we, please, have [illegible] from the Front that, let Mr [illegible] go to the winds, one of their [illegible] first acts on taking charge in [illegible] Building will be to release [illegible] Sanyal and the rest of the poli[illegible] prisoners who are freely described [illegible] adherents of the Naxalbari path? [illegible] we have a pledge that all those [illegible] have been clamped behind the [illegible] under the Preventive Detention [illegible] for exclusively political reasons [illegible] be let out with honour, and all [illegible] cases related to disputes over [illegible] and harvesting rights be summa[illegible] withdraw? In other words, can [illegible] have a straightforward assurance [illegible] the United Front that the ethos [illegible] follow will be one unflinchingly [illegible] the cause of workers, the pea[illegible] and the middle class, and not [illegible] handed out by Indira Gandhi, [illegible] Desai, Y. B. Chavan and com[illegible]? Will the United Front be [illegible] of its professed socialist faith—[illegible] fearless in its defence of it? The [illegible] that would happen to the Front [illegible] be for it to be stampeded into [illegible] course of action by the [illegible] by the enemy newspapers, by [illegible] put-up voices of the capital[illegible] and the rich landowners, as it was [illegible]. One would hope that Mr [illegible] Mukherjee is a reformed man [illegible]; at least, he ought to be [illegible] man.

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It is no use putting on blinkers. The CP(M), for its own long-term survival—if not for the long-term interests of the movement—has to build a line of communication with the young militants who are now either in the wilderness or in formal disgrace. Its failure to do so will be a major tragedy; let nobody be under any illusion that simply because a few of the recalcitrants are turned out from the party, everything will turn out to be sweet and smooth; the fact remains that the new generation of idealists are no longer feeling attracted to the CP(M). Unless the party thinks that it can march along despite lack of support from the younger generation, it has to do something about it and quick. The triumphal re-entry into Writers' Building cannot possibly be the end of the road for the party. Or maybe I am mistaken.

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U. P. Teachers On Warpath ?

INDUKANTA SHUKLA

THE Higher Secondary school teachers have defied the ordinance and the jails are being filled up with them. The Government, as usual, pleads its helplessness for lack of funds. But people are amazed at the alacrity with which it swung into action and clamped the draconian ordinance similar to the one against clerks rammed by New Delhi earlier. And the teachers ask why does the Government, which is sluggish and craven vis-a-vis the tycoons guilty of evasion of taxes running into crores, and other malpractices like adulteration and blackmarketing, swoop so swiftly and savagely on the clerks and teachers? Dangerous questions these and for raising them teachers must be taught a lesson. The bona fides of the Government, on this reckoning, are suspect and its behaviour reprehensible.

Collaterally, for their persistent refusal to sabotage the teachers' movement the leftists are being rounded up all over the State. The pattern is familiar and the HQ of these Maffia operations is called the capital of India. Lucknow is as much under a Congress Government as New Delhi. Popular assertion that President's rule is Congress rule is daily demonstrable.

What has given the Government the creeps? The respectable teachers have shed their bourgeois inhibitions, banded together for a cause and thrown their chins up for the first time. This massive upsurge has injected into them a militancy whose depths and dimentions they are viewing with gladsome wonder, and the Government with mistrust and apprehension. Both are busy calculating its potential. The teachers feel re-assured and confident, the Government glowers. What is more, the students and degree college teachers have pledged their supoort to the striking fraternity.

Which is what the Government is frightened of. Closing of discriminatory ranks among teachers may well be one welcome consequence of the movement. It may be fleeting, it may be feckless. But it is there, evolving, emerging visibly. Again, the strike has brought the teachers and students closer in an affectionate alignment reminiscent, however faintly at present, of the pre-Independence era. Some of the stigma of the teacher as one among many mercenaries in modern society is shed, and it is touching to see wave after wave of students—kids among them—visiting their teachers in the jails to pay them their regards and offer them their services so that they bear their tedium well. This development, understandably, peeves and perturbs the oligarchs who are avowed votaries or ventriloquists of non-alignment.

An aspect of the movement has come, rightly enough, into the proper focus. In case of a prolonged showdown with the Government, the plight of the urban teachers would be markedly difficult, and different from that of those with rural assets and relatives to fall back upon. For such an eventuality the teachers perhaps did not prepare themselves. But the solidarity forged among them in the first bout with the Government will hereafter stir into function that organizational acumen which in their first flush of mass action they failed to invoke and benefit by. Bonism may not be justified in the present phase, but these postures and plays are radical enough in the cow country. And this is to say much.

Tailpiece: The Government is spending Rs. 7.50 per teacher in the jails. But the teachers insist it is only Rs. 3 per head. Whose pockets are lined with the rest of the dough? Of the officers of a government which chronically bewails lack of funds.

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BHU is not for Bur

FROM A CORRESPONDE

DR Sen from the eminent h Delhi sings paeans of autonomy while a Vice-Ch called (P)A. C. Joshi looks maniacs and marauders are upon innocent students and broken, limbs dislocated, bo tered and property pillaged o fire. The two-pronged flame- are the (R)SS and the PAC, called Armed Constabulary (o cial picaroons) and the black Hindu Nazis run amuck.

A visit to the district jail, gives a glimpse of their doing brilliant students of Mining-M gy, one from Lucknow, anoth Orissa, first-rankers to b drenched in blood, their bod daged all over. They are and wondering as to what b on them. Other students lyin side were as badly beaten an ed. Unable to move or talk ably they told me somehow were set upon by some gangs lowed by PAC hoodlums who their articles, bashed them o left, arrested them and then h lined up in the Bhelupura polic for a second dressing down undid them.

The progressive students an leaders of the city were clu gether in a selective hunt l quick arrests in several swoop the incendiarism and pillage varsity could be imputed to Funnily enough, the comrades testing that their leaders did the varsity at all this year. T serve their parliamentary sk left the students in the lurch, less. Even this failed to w certifiable respectability nece escaping the Congress dragn

The leftists are poor smo for the real goons and favo the PAC-AC combine. The to be vindicated by New Delh stakes are high with the mini- imminent. A scapegoat for tion as also for buttressing the

...le must be invented. Surely it is ... to be the Black Hoods of the ... for they, from all accounts, have ...ered yeoman service by burning ...perty and bleeding people. Here ... handy the commies. Here enter ... Home Ministry of Chhatrapati ...

Yes, now there is peace—through ...sale absenteeism. In fright the ... fled the hostels, stayed in the ... hotels outside, and in despair left ... city. Yet the VC tells a gullible ... that the situation is normal and ... varsity is to remain open. With ... students gone or in jail, with ... 144 clamped on the city, with ... astride the campus, if the situa... can be described as normal, God ... Joshi's perception.

The boys recall, as the citizens do, ... Mr Joshi who broke peace by ... insistence, despite seething tur... on keeping BHU open—which ... the students being trapped for ...

The VC, the PAC and the Union ... Ministry outfit has a simplistic ... for problems plaguing India. ...ionally it is Bengalis who make ... and launch revolts. Impound ... and all be well. And this be... held in dead earnestness is evident ... the rabid thoroughness with ... Mukherjis, Malliks, Majumdars ... Sinhas have been pulverized. If ... are a few Singhs etc. among them, ... them know that this contact is ...stible.

The medieval manner in which the ... Vidyapith students' peaceful pro... a token of their sympathy for ... BHU brethren, was smashed and ... way in which the PAC boors ... and hacked at them in the ... bathrooms, verandas is ... among other things, of the ... the VC would have. The walls ... floors of the hostel, as in BHU, ... splashes of blood on them are ... but eloquent testimonies that ... have myriad names, and they ... born in a certain State of India, ... made out of intelligent, indepen... minded young men and women ... hold their heads high and cry ... death: Down with Fascism! ... is not for burning!

The Comprador And His Capital

NISHAD

WE give below certain facts and figures relating to some of the biggest companies in India, which we hope would explode the myth that the big capitalists/industrialists of India are independent and mutually competitive groups which have antagonistic contradiction with each other and imperialism.

The objective facts of the Indian economic scene should have been enough to show that in the age of imperialism, an independent, national, big bourgeois cannot develop in any colonial country. In order to develop at all the bourgeoisie of the colonial country must submit to and ally itself with imperilaism; that in spite of being an underdeveloped country, India's industry is operating with huge idle capacity; that Indian industry is having to close down, retrench, reduce real wages, and pauperise both the urban and the rural sections. In short it is being made to kill its own market; that Indian industry has at present and in the past a relationship with imperialism and feudalism which is overwhelmingly submissive and friendly; that Indian industry is having to import unpatented know-how at high cost and accept restrictions on export from foreign "collaborators". (RBI-Survey of Collaboration); that the State depends absolutely on foreign imperialists; that the rupee, even within the country, is totally dependent on those who hold one-fifth of the total money in circulation—PL 480; that it is highly depended on an infrastucture (i.e. railways, roads, power, food, administration of the country) which is under the command of U.S. and Russian economic and political interests; that the very origin and growth of the Indian entrepreneur in the colonial era was that of a subservient lackey, never that of an independent bourgeois (in contrast to the development of the bourgeois of France, Germany, U.K. or pre-World War II Japan).

In the tables given later we have dealt with companies which belong to the biggest industrial families in India. The CPI and CPI(M) hope to use the "democratic tendencies", "the anti-feudal inclinations", "the anti-imperialist contradictions", of the group. It is this faith which leads them to swear by the Constitution, rule by UF Ministries and depend exclusively on non-violent, non-revolutionary tactics. From 1952 onwards their actions have been based on a single premise—that there is an *independent* Indian big bourgeois.

Being bourgeois and big, this class is, of course an "enemy" to the CPI and CPI(M). But the "enmity" derives more from the "monopolist" character of this bourgeois than from the latter's *basic anti-national, comprador origin and character*. Therefore, to the CPI and CPI(M) this class is an enigma—to be fostered and to be fought at the same time. This results in the confusion and the bewildering changes of direction that so frequently take place in the action of these parties. In order to explain away the facts of life, the two parties maintain that this class is "leaning heavy on" or "is increasingly compromising with" imperialism. They even go so far as to say that "we are in danger of coming under neo-colonialist exploitation." They argue that till 1947 India was a colony (and therefore could only have a dependent big bourgeois); that from 1947 India became independent and the big bourgeois picked up State power and became bigger and more independent until 1957, (as if "becoming" and "picking up" could happen in the present epoch); that since 1957, according to CPI and CPI(M), the bourgeois has been submitting, is compromising with imperialism, but apparently no qualitative change has occurred.

What we give below is neither complete nor conclusive. Yet, it ought to serve as an indication of the financial dependence of the Indian big bourgeois on foreign finance.

This study bases itself on the fact

that the ability of the capitalist to serve his own and national interest diminishes as he becomes increasingly dependent upon foreign finance. When dependence on foreign loans reaches, such proportions that for every Re. 1 of the "owner" he has borrowed Rs. 3 or 4 even Rs. 10, from foreigners, his "independence" must logically vanish. It is his creditors by whose grace he earns his income. His creditors are then in a position to dictate his policies, about sales, purchase, finance and national politics ; control his operations and destroy him, should he prove disloyal or unruly.

The relevance of this type of study can be gauged from the following comment made in the course of a speech to shareholders of Indian Iron & Steel Company by Sir Biren Mukherjee on July 24, 1968. Discussing the primary liability of the management to the creditors and informing the shareholders that no dividend shall be paid to them, he said : "Shareholders will realise that whereas the gross block of the Company has increased from Rs. 33 crores to Rs. 121 crores at present, their own direct contribution towards the growth of the Company has been limited to only Rs. 7 crores through the proceeds of a small issue in 1957".

In this paper, we repeat, the economy is not treated as a whole, but individual large companies have been analysed on the basis of their annual reports. Therefore, two important aspects have not been touched upon. These are dependence of Indian big bourgeois on foreign (mainly imperialist) technology, not only for the pilot plants but also for subsequent expansions and even for maintenance; and the dependence of the entire infrastructure of Indian industry and commerce—administration, food, railways, power, roads—upon imperialist 'aid'.

The data have been arranged as follows :

1. *Group* : The Indian business group that supposedly "contro economy.

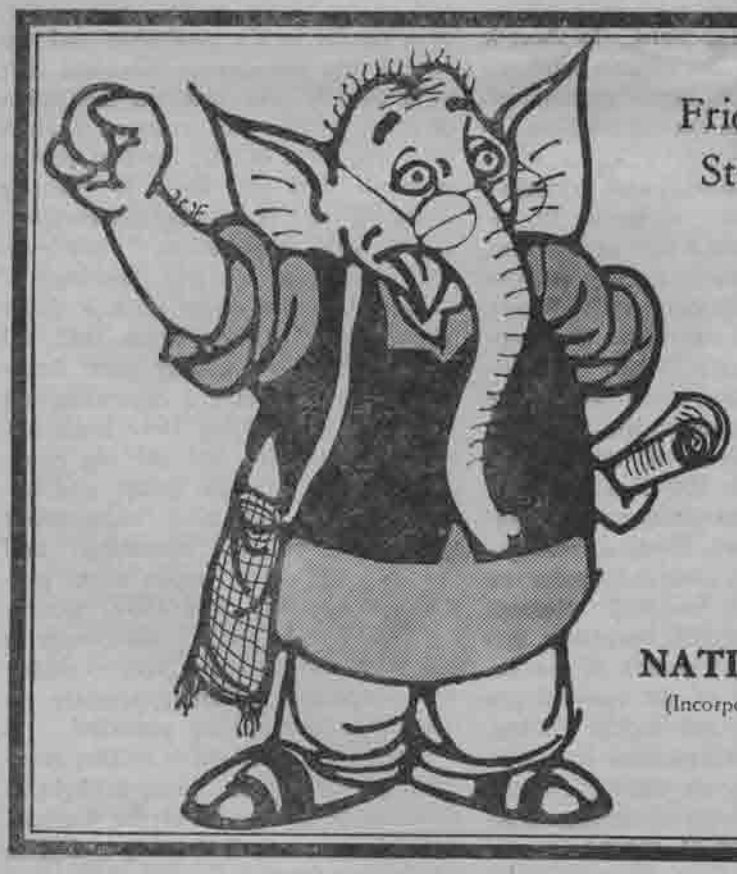
In actual practice they are ers-cum-senior partners who commission, interest and share fit of the business ; and exerci tical power by virtue of their ship" (actually by virtue of the sition as favoured agents of that foreign power); and dr the foreign creditor profits in the of interest, profit on capital and tenance purchases, dividends share of the Indian and Afr Market.

2. *Company*

Name of Company and annual report, and the name collaborating foreign group.

3. *Equity and Return*

Equity capital is that capital ownership (legally at least) a right to elect the directors company. The "owning" grou dom owns the total equity They just invest enough to give selves a controlling interest and



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[illegible] the rest of the shares as wide-[illegible] possible so that their authority [illegible] never be challenged. Sometimes [illegible] "owning" group's share of equity [illegible] can be as low as 20%.

[illegible] the total equity capital of a [illegible]pany, a part might represent bonus [illegible]. These are profits distributed [illegible] shares. Therefore, these do not [illegible]sent money investment by share-[illegible]rs. The profit was built up by [illegible] borrowed capital. Therefore the [illegible] of bonus shares owe more to [illegible] creditors than to their investment. To find the real contribution of the shareholders, bonus capital is to be deducted from total equity.

This is the crux of the study: the profit of the Indian bourgeois is dependent chiefly on foreign (mainly U.S.) finance and therefore its relationship with imperialism is mainly non-antagonistic.

4. *Loans*

Name of the creditor. Foreign creditors are grouped together.

The sum paid as interest is shown. Compare this with dividend, that is, what the shareholders get and what the creditors take.

5. *Ratio*

Foreign loan for every rupee of actually contributed capital.

6. *Abbreviations*

IBRD —World Bank
DLF —Development Loan Fund —USA
AID —Agency for International Development, USA
EXIM —Export Import Bank—USA
CDFC —Commonwealth Development Fund—UK
ICICI —Industrial Credit and Development Corporation

All in Rupees Crores

Company	Equity		Foreign Loan		Ratio
Tata Iron & Steel Co. TISCO 1967-1968	Equity	: 38.6	IBRD, U.S.	25.7	
	Bonus	: 14.8	N & G Bank UK	2.0	
	Contrbn.	: 23.8	ICICI	.9	
	Dividend	: 4.4		28.6	1:1.2
			INTEREST	2.9	

[illegible] Growth

	Loans	Assets	Profit
1925-26	6.7	21	1.0
1944-45	2.3	34	4.0
1951-52	2.5	44	5.4
1956-57	21.5	93	8.1
1958-59	83.8	172	8.2
1966-67	51.5	238	19.1

Andhra Valley Power 1667-69			Foreign Loan		Ratio
	Equity	: 3.3	AID US	6.3	
			IBRD—US	3.3	
				9.6	1:3
	Dividend	: .4	INTEREST	.6	

[illegible] Growth

	Loans	Assets	Profit
1925-26	3.8	6.1	.2
1946-47	1.0	5.1	.2
1950-51	1.0	5.2	.3
1960-61	4.8	11.7	.7
1967-68	10.3	18.6	1.3

Group	Company	Equity		Foreign Loan	
TATA	Tata Engineering & Locomotive Co. Ltd. TELCO: 1966-67 (West German)	Equity	: 14.8	AID—US	19.1
		Bonus	: 2.0		
		Contrbn.	: 12.3		
		DIVIDEND	2.1	INTEREST	3.2
BIRLA	Century Spinning 1967	Equity	: 3.2	Institutions	5.3
		Bonus	: 1.9	Suppliers of Machinery	1.9
		Contrbn.	: 1.3		7.2
		DIVIDEND	.7	INTEREST	.8
BIRLA	Orient Paper 1967-68	Equity	: 3.8	EXIM—US	10.9
		Bonus	: 3.0		
		Contrbn.	: .8		
		DIVIDEND	.4	INTEREST	1.6
BIRLA	Hindustan Motor 1967-68 (General Motors USA)	Equity	: 8.2	AID—US	22.1
				CDFC—UK	1.1
					23.2
BIRLA	Hindustan Aluminium 1967 (Kaiser Aluminium USA)	DIVIDEND	1.0	INTEREST	2.0
		Equity	: 7.1	EXIM (US)	19.3
				AID (US)	4.8
				Kaiser (US)	.5
				ICICI	.1
					24.7
BIRLA	Renusaga Power Co. (General Electric USA)	DIVIDEND	.6	INTEREST	1.9
		Equity	: 3.8	AID (US)	4.8
				Suppliers of machinery—US	10.3
					15.1
		DIVIDEND	Nil	INTEREST	.4

Group	Company	Equity		Foreign Loan	
TATA	Tata Engineering & Locomotive Co. Ltd. TELCO: 1966-67 (West German)	Equity	: 14.8	AID—US	19.1
		Bonus	: 2.0		
		Contrbn.	: 12.3		
		DIVIDEND	2.1	INTEREST	3.2
BIRLA	Century Spinning 1967	Equity	: 3.2	Institutions	5.3
		Bonus	: 1.9	Suppliers of Machinery	1.9
		Contrbn.	: 1.3		7.2
		DIVIDEND	.7	INTEREST	.8
BIRLA	Orient Paper 1967-68	Equity	: 3.8	EXIM—US	10.9
		Bonus	: 3.0		
		Contrbn.	: .8		
		DIVIDEND	.4	INTEREST	1.6
BIRLA	Hindustan Motor 1967-68 (General Motors USA)	Equity	: 8.2	AID—US	22.1
				CDFC—UK	1.1
					23.2
BIRLA	Hindustan Aluminium 1967 (Kaiser Aluminium USA)	DIVIDEND	1.0	INTEREST	2.0
		Equity	: 7.1	EXIM (US)	19.3
				AID (US)	4.8
				Kaiser (US)	.5
				ICICI	.1
					24.7
BIRLA	Renusaga Power Co. (General Electric USA)	DIVIDEND	.6	INTEREST	1.9
		Equity	: 3.8	AID (US)	4.8
				Suppliers of machinery—US	10.3
					15.1
		DIVIDEND	Nil	INTEREST	.4

	Company	Equity		Foreign Loan		Ratio
RI RAM	Delhi Cloth Mills DCM 1967-68	Equity :	6.6	AID (US)	6.4	1:10.2
		Bonus :	5.5	ICICI	.2	
		Contrbn. :	1.1	Mitsubishi	2.0	
				Suppliers of Machinery	2.7	
					11.2	
		DIVIDEND	.8	INTEREST	1.7	
AICHAND	Premier Automobiles 1965-66 (FIAT—Italy)	Equity :	7.5	DLF (US) AID	6.7	1:1
				Fiat	.4	
					7.1	
		DIVIDEND	.4	INTEREST	1.0	

Growth

	Loans	Assets
1946-47	—	.3
1950-51	.7	2.0
1955-56	3.0	3.0
1960-61	4.0	6.0
1965-66	16.2	21.4

ARTIN BURN	Indian Iron & Steel Co. 1967-68	Equity		IBRD (US)	6.5	1:1.3
		Equity :	24.8	N & G (UK)	6.6	
		Bonus :	14.5			
		Contrbn. :	10.3		13.1	
		DIVIDEND	Nil	INTEREST	1.2	
HETTIAR	Ashok Leyland (1967-68) (Leyland UK)	Equity :	7.8	CDFCC (UK)	.9	1:2.4
		Foreign Holding	4.3	N & G (UK)	4.3	
				FNCB (US)	1.2	
			3.5	ICICI	1.8	
					3.2	
		DIVIDEND	.6	INTEREST	.4	
HETTIAR	Madras Aluminium (Montecatini—Italy)	Equity :	4.5	Mediobanca Italy	8.6	1:2.2
		Foreign Holding :	.5	ICICI	.1	
			4.0		8.7	
			4.0			
		DIVIDEND	Nil	INTEREST	.7	

Group	Company	Equity		Foreign Loan	
MAFATLAL	Mafatlal Fine Spinning 1966-67	Equity	: .9	ICICI	1.0
		Bonus	: .5		
		Contrbn.	: .4	Suppliers of Machinery	0.8
					1.8
		DIVIDEND	.3	INTEREST	.2
MAFATLAL	National Organic Chemical 1967 (Shell Petroleum) Co. UK—Dutch)	Equity	: 12.0	Foreign Guarantee	.6
				ICICI	1.0
				Shell	16.3
					17.9
		DIVIDEND	Nil	INTEREST	1.3

The Press

Rats Of Haryana

COMMENTATOR

THE Congress balloon has been pricked in Haryana at last. Most papers have expressed themselves against the tactics employed by the Congress party to keep itself in power in Haryana, though they all regret the imminent end of Congress rule in the State. Mr Bhagwat Dayal Sharma, who organised the defection, has come in for sharp criticism; so also the newly formed United Front. But the present Chief Minister, Mr Bansi Lal, emerges practically unscathed, though some papers have not been able to agree with him that the assembly should be dissolved in the event of a fall of the Congress Ministry.

The Indian Express regrets that even when Mr Sharma gave the High Command 24 hours' ultimatum, the central leadership tried to get the rebel leader to come to Delhi for a bargaining session. Mr Sharma has been suspended only and no action has been taken against the 15 Congress MLAs who have defected from the party under Mr Sharma's persuasion. Apparently it is still hoped that some, if not all, of these defectors can be brought back to the Congress fold. One is therefore compelled to conclude that opportunism reigns supreme in all camps. Advising the Governor to deal with the situation in an "upright manner" the paper says that it is not the Governor's job to determine whether Mr Bansi Lal has lost his legislative majority. The question must be decided on the floor of the House, and the Governor should lose no time in summoning the Assembly for this purpose. Nor should he make the mistake of dissolving the House in case Mr Bansi Lal advises dissolution to evade defeat on the floor of the House. In the event of the Bansi Lal Ministry's defeat, the proper course would be to give the SVD a chance to form a Government. It is not the Governor's function to punish defectors. Even if Haryana's politicians are determined to make a mockery of parliamentary democracy, the Governor should try to keep alive the spirit of the parliamentary system.

The Times of India also feels that the Centre must put out of its mind any thought of imposing President's rule on Haryana by way of a pre-emptive strike to protect parliamentry democracy. Whether the Congress or the newly expanded SVD has a [illegible] rity in the legislature is a qu[illegible] which has to be decided on the [illegible] of the House and nowhere else. [illegible] can it be assumed in advance th[illegible] majority claimed by one side o[illegible] other will be necessarily unstab[illegible] will lead to a perversion of the p[illegible] mentary process. This too has [illegible] confirmed by events. Holding [illegible] Congress High Command respo[illegible] for the turn of events in Haryan[illegible] paper says that common prud[illegible] should have warned the High C[illegible] mand against accepting the [illegible] tions of Mr Bansi Lal, who was [illegible] ly new to the rough and tumb[illegible] Haryana politics. Relying on [illegible] optimistic assessment the Co[illegible] President apparently decided [illegible] show of firmness would be in [illegible] forgetting that in the case of a [illegible] so accident-prone as the Har[illegible] Congress, a posture of this kind, [illegible] one was very careful, might only [illegible] pear farcical. This is precisely [illegible] has happened. Until almost the [illegible] minute, the High Command see[illegible] confident of averting a trial of str[illegible] or being able to overcome it and [illegible] of its determination to maintain [illegible] cipline. It was clearly unprepared [illegible] the crisis that has overtaken it. In [illegible] face of the crisis the High Comma[illegible]

[illegible] to maintain discipline [illegible] noticeably. A massive ex[illegible] of the Cabinet seems likely, [illegible] is a game at which Mr Bansi [illegible] be no match for Rao Birendra [illegible] who has been waiting in the [illegible] all these months and now moves [illegible] centre of the stage as Mr [illegible]'s principal ally. The Bansi Lal [illegible] may salvage enough from the [illegible] to keep afloat a little longer [illegible] by giving up all pretence of [illegible] discipline.

[illegible] *Hindustan Times* notes that [illegible] as impressively as it had, [illegible] a mid-term poll, pulled itself [illegible] political instability, the infant [illegible] of Haryana has moved to the [illegible] of instability. How the Cong[illegible] leaders handle the issue of indis[illegible] highlighted once again by the [illegible] in Haryana is strictly speak[illegible] internal affair of their party. [illegible] thing to bear in mind is how [illegible] the people of Haryana to [illegible] stable representative govern[illegible]. Whether the Congress party [illegible] its mandate to govern the [illegible] must be decided on the floor of [illegible] legislature. It is the only arena in [illegible] the claim of the defectors and [illegible] can be tested convin[illegible]. Normally the State Assembly [illegible] meet towards the end of the [illegible] month. But it can and should [illegible] as soon as possible. What [illegible] be suggested immediatelly is that [illegible] should defectors be reward[illegible] ministership. This principle [illegible] for both the Congress and the [illegible].

[illegible] Bengal Recalled

[illegible] *Statesman* recalls that when the [illegible] of Mr Ajoy Mukherjee's [illegible] Front Ministry in West Bengal [illegible] last year because of de[illegible] by Dr P. C. Ghosh and others, [illegible] delay in summoning the [illegible] was considered so objec[illegible] by the Governor that the State [illegible] was dismissed. This [illegible] of action considered too preci[illegible] at that time need not be repeat[illegible] Haryana. But both the Centre [illegible] the Governor owe it to the [illegible] to use all their constitu[illegible] and moral authority to ensure that Mr Bansi Lal is not allowed to delay the summoning of the Assembly. To allow him to hold the session at the end of January, as at present scheduled, would be an act of impropriety which could seriously undermine faith in the impartiality of the Centre. The precise number of defections may be a matter of dispute, and it is possible, indeed probable, that some at least of the Gaya Rams may again turn into Aya Rams at the drop of a Gandhi cap. But there can be no denying the fact that the Congress party's majority in the legislature has been called into question. The paper advises the central leadership of the Congress to withhold permission for Cabinet expansion in Haryana, though it contends that criticism of political bribery comes ill from representatives of political parties which are members of the SVD in Madhya Pradesh.

Patriot says that Haryana must be accepted by the Congress party's scarecrow president and those who believe that a political organisation can be built round a system of rituals and formalities as the final warning that a party without a true economic purpose and a following committed to it cannot exist and grow in modern India. Mr Nijalingappa and Mr Morarji Desai and perhaps most of the others who take their ease in Delhi and imagine that the pompous puerilities with which they seek to hide their political incompetence and lack of dedication to principles are not leaders who can revive the kind of faith that a large party requires if it is to become effective again. Their single-minded absorption in the problems of office and organisational power is more than matched by the cold-blooded cynicism of those who call themselves the second-rank leaders or "workers" of the party. The former's hope that pulling down non-Congress Governments here and there with the aid of unprincipled charlatans will eventually convince the people that only the apolitical opportunism of Congress power-mongers can give administrative stability is being frustrated. If there had been secret hopes in certain quarters that after the mid-term elections the Government of Kerala could be pulled down under cover of constitutional casuistry, what has happened in Haryana should dash them. The lesson that Mr Sharma and Mr Bansi Lal have taught is not for the so-called central leadership of the party which is largely made up of individuals with similar inclinations and aptitudes. The latter will only treat it as one more chess problem that can be solved by moving one individual here or another there or by striking deals between themselves. The lesson is for those younger Congressmen who desperately look forward even today to a time when their once disciplined and principled party can once more face the people without placards of corruption and factionalism hung round its over-fat neck. For them it is an opportunity to do some honest heart-searching and on the basis of it to initiate a movement of house-cleaning that will drive out of the organisation a number of professional office-hunters who go about pretending that they enjoy the confidence of the people.

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Taras Shevchenko

By A Drama Critic

ONE does not really know what resources an amateur group possesses to enable one to give a fair-minded opinion: after all, the system under which an activity develops must affect it deeply. If one upholds the principle that a biographical play should be accurate in manners, costume and locale, then Abhijan's presentation fails. If on the other hand it is meant to convey the motivating idea which makes the character worth remembering, then it succeeds to the extent which Monmotho Roy's play succeeds.

The biography begins in 1838 with Taras Shevchenko, the Ukrainian poet and artist, getting his freedom from Baron Engelhardt. A series of seven episodes depict his development as a revolutionary, his incarceration and finally his death. To those seven scenes was added a tableau which, though visually pleasing in patches, failed to evoke either mood or emotion. The man in drainpipe trousers standing on a dais baffled the senses. The singer down the aisle and the simultaneous speaking on the stage was drowned by the excitement of an over-exuberant audience. It must have irritated the sensitive and disgusted the serious types in the hall.

Far too many "special effects" were tried, and since minor imprecisions in them mar the general effect, a curb on the producer's enthusiasm for such effects would have been for the better.

The play itself was good only in parts. The scene placed in the village of Kirilova was perhaps the weakest both in acting and in content. The best was undoubtedly the episode inside Novopetrovsk Jail. Though why painted flats were introduced suddenly when most of the play was performed in front of curtains and back-lit screens, must remain a mystery. The end of the play came as an anti-climax. The costumes, except in the case of the women, were assembled according to availability and Baron Engelhardt was made to look like an American truck driver complete with leather jerkin, while his son came right out of a visiting circus. This bizarre costumery was intended to lampoon the landlord class but would have been done better by exaggeration of manner and dress of the period itself. Since no period costumes were attempted, the baron and his son could have worn modern costumes with necessary touches to affect the ludicrous. While on this subject, the number of red wigs seen in this production was fantastic. The same money spent on costumes could have helped the visual effect more.

Although the standard of acting was generally good, some minor parts could have been better served. Competent performances were put up by Shyamoo Roychowdhpry in the title role, ably supported by Meena Halder as Natasha. Since three microphones were assisting the voices, there were many occasions when the words seemed but a jumble of noises. Particularly at fault was Amal Mukherjee as Ivan, who was made to walk up and down between a table and the back drop. He was only partly heard, as every time he turned his back to the audience his words were completely lost. It was unfortunate that Mahadev Das playing the Police Inspector, whose lines were delivered clearly, acted as if he had been lifted out of the silent films.

As a first production, Taras Shevchenko was ambitious but was carried through fairly well. After the jail scene, however, one felt that the last part could have been omitted so that Taras Shevchenko remained a hero in the minds of the audience and not become a mere idol.

So much work and so much dedication deserves a better audience—please let us keep out the 12-year-olds and certainly those below that age.

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An Empty Canv

Prabodh Kumar Ma

APAN IAN, Tapan Sinh film, has its focus pri the teenagers who are appare but who, after all, are our "u and not particularly bad gu circumstance maketh them s case, however, is unconvinc sented, what with the scratch Sinha manages to scrap up.

The material has good po the director curiously choos tuous way of storytelling. T duction itself is quite an process. An old woman's p shown in pieces when it had b despite the ruffian type h rough postures—the bloke h a golden heart. Then we se Devi as the old woman with a make-up who clings to her ho she seems destined to be in to time, to pass through ex which we must share and she over to her apanjon's estab She, of course, could not quite what was in the offing, only th ing hand enlightens her on th of the city bred. We find som around and the old woman p forsakes her relations to join t their den.

There are two groups of fact. One is led by an imm dressed boy (a newcomer in fold), a dispenser of justice and of universal provider to the children who hop around him background is not sufficiently ed. They are all fair comple (compared to the other group), ing like bhadralog whose plig faintly makes out from the d is mainly due to postponement minations or something to tha Their leader's fate seems to h sealed after the collapse of h lorn existence, the damsel's having been instrumental in him to jail. We are shown it in back as we are often reluctan to the old woman's past life whacky flashbacks. This te seems to have some fascinat

and it takes away considerably whatever little he has achieved of storytelling. He seems to confidence in straightforward narrative this film—the subject may given him jitters for he is plainly to tackle it even in terms of sociological formations.

is another group nearly all of have a dark complexion. This way, maybe unwitting way, out the bhadralog background of the other group. Significantly no character, not even the leader to give us any insight. The of this group, however, is in the traditional style of Bengali cinema, in a disreputable company with a bottle of liquor. up Sinha's attitude towards

fairer group (complexion-wise) their Tagore and the director let them forget their Tagore for they burst into one in In occasional fisticuffs with the group, they tend to fare better. encounters are generally anaemic, one is the taker of blows while the other remains in a suspended state, presumably not to disturb the frame.

But the director is not only content with his brand of sociology, he must make his foray into the political arena. Two rivals in the election make use of the rival groups and both curiously are swatantras, not the party candidate one presumes but mere independents. The political process is sought to be pilloried but it is quite ineffectual.

The final confrontation of the two groups takes place on what looks like quite a battlefield. Blows and sticks are used liberally but their ultimate weapon, the revolver, is meant for the grandma from the village whose collapse ends the film and possibly the values she so assiduously believes in. And the police take care of the other characters.

Apan Jan is the usual sentimental stuff of the Bengali screen with a veneer of contemporainity that is facile. The characters are hardly that credible quantity that might give an idea of what social ferment is like. Apart from the story which is full of strange quirks the making of the film does not speak well of the director as a craftsman.

Sinha is his own director of music and, of all songs he makes use of one by Atulprasad which is a rousing call to the countrymen. One wonders for whom it is intended by the director in the film.

Two Exhibitions

By An Art Critic

THE art of ceramics or the making of clay vessels, effigies and toys has been practised in India from time immemorial. In West Bengal, terracotta reached monumental proportions in the temples and an exquisite refinement in the brick carvings that adorned their walls. But the making of ceramics, using the Western methods of baking, is of comparatively recent origin as commercial venture and craft.

Christine and Ashis Janah, two well-known practitioners of this craft,

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held an exhibition of their recent work at the Academy of Fine Arts last week. Not merely in technique but in their choice of forms and glazes, the Janahs have a marked Western orientation. This was evident also from their latest exhibition which included decorative objects like ceramic sculptures, vases of various shapes and sizes, bottles and vials, jewellery and toys as well as utilitarian products like cups and glasses, dishes and bowls, tea and coffee sets. But in the present exhibition, there were also some items that showed that they are now turning to our traditional terra-cotta for inspiration and are adapting some of its elements to suit their purpose. For instance, in some vases, they used clay figurines as decorations and the result was not unpleasing. Altogether, it was an interesting show and contained at least a few exhibits of excellence.

Greeting Cards

Shilpayan, a group of young artists, held an exhibition of greeting cards, letterheads and envelope sets, prints on textiles and some water colours and temperas at the Academy of Fine Arts last week.

The greeting cards dominated the show and some of them, using old illustrations from illuminated manuscrips and sculptures and printed in silk screen on hand made paper, were done with taste and refinement. But the same cannot be said about the letterhead and envelope sets and the cases containing what was described as 'Thank you' cards. Of the other exhibits, two largish prints on textile, based on figures, based on Indian miniatures, were well-drawn and well-printed.

Letters

The Benefactor !

Mr Bhut Nath Bhattacharjee has been swift to come to the defence of the benefactor of his class—McNamara (December 7). With pompous sarcasm and righteous indignation, he points out that Calcutta's electric supply *partly* comes from the DVC system, which is *partly* financed by the World Bank. How terribly thrilling this is for those whose homes are (partly ?) furnished with (Fedders-Lloyd ?) air-conditioners ! No doubt those of Calcutta's population who do not even *partly* benefit from electricity—let alone that part of it which is the gift (or loan ?) of the World Bank—should also go down on bended knees and genuflect to the latest minion of U.S. monopoly capital. With remorseless logic Mr Bhattacharjee goes on to say that because the World Bank dumped some capital on the DVC (at high rates of interest), "Calcutta still breathes." One doubts if the children rummaging in Calcutta's rubbish heaps, or the tens of thousand sleeping on Calcutta's pavements are over-enthused about the fact that they "still breathe."

Mr Bhattacherjee is angered that the Russians did not genuflect to the Americans after the Second World War, in spite of the fact that the latter had already begun their encirclement of the socialist world and their now-famous cacophony about "communist aggression." He also cannot understand why China did not gratefully acknowledge her debt to Russia after the latter suddenly cut off aid and withdrew all her technicians leaving hundreds of projects in the air as part of her economic blackmail.

The editor of *Frontier* and "like-minded politicians" have "destructive designs," complains the aggrieved admirer of McNamara. Of course, the system which by 1960 had destroyed 125 million tons of bread grain (enough food for all Indians for one year) in order to keep up world prices is being extremely constructive. The system which in the past 14 years has destroyed 4 billion dollars worth of farm surpluses and which rains 30 billion dollars worth of destruction on Vietnam every year, is, of course, only doing all this as part of a grand construction plan for the world.

India is now at a stage where, apart from the millions of rupees of repatriated profit leaving the country, she is having to borrow more in order to pay off old loans—from such philanthropic institutions as the [illegible] minated World Bank. Y[illegible] Bhattacharjee, "an open [illegible] clear mind are enough to [illegible] culprits." I suggest that [illegible] some eye-opening and [illegible] for himself. For open eyes [illegible] minds are one type of [illegible] which even McNamara [illegible] benefaction will not be willing [illegible]

DILIP [illegible]

Sniping

While commenting on [illegible] anger" and the recent massive [illegible] strations against President [illegible] (*Frontier*, December 7) you [illegible] "what the Indian Government [illegible] have proclaimed and done [illegible] demonstrations taken place [illegible] after a shattering military de[illegible]

It is a common experience [illegible] readers of *Frontier* that whi[illegible] sing all and sundry subjects you [illegible] miss an opportunity to snipe [illegible] Government of your own [illegible] however unsuited the occa[illegible] be. You must know illog[illegible] cism is just as bad as uncrit[illegible] mism. Both do no credit [illegible] authors but betray a certain [illegible] of immaturity of mind. W[illegible] made the above remark you [illegible] forgot that "what the Indian G[illegible] ment would have proclaim[illegible] done", the dictatorial re[illegible] Nasser and Ayub need not [illegible] and do, for the powers sought [illegible] proclamations are already [illegible] them. Unlike their counte[illegible] India, the students in Egypt [illegible] free press and a greater fre[illegible] expression and association." I[illegible] been in Egypt you would [illegible] achieve a "free Press" first [illegible] out a weekly like *Frontier*.

BHUT NATH BHATTAC[illegible]

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HUNGER!!!

India's poverty is paradoxical. Here, too many people toil to wrest a living from the earth, but the earth yields far too little. Embarrassed by the richness of resources and the poverty of means to exploit them, India produces not enough food to feed all of its population.

Only large-scale mechanized farming coupled with intensive rural electrification can get the country permanently out of this rut. Rural electrification on a wide scale can bring power to our farmers and help them grow more food, and attain a new prosperity.

GEC have been playing a key role in making the country's rural electrification programme a success. GEC's vast reservoir of technical know-how and resources are directed to improve continually all GEC equipment that are essential to cope with the increasing problems of power distribution and utilisation in rural areas.

During these years, GEC have been called, many times, to participate in the vital nation-building projects that are helping to change the face of rural India—projects that include the Bhakra Nangal and the Hirakud Dams. GEC have also played a leading role in successfully implementing the programme of village electrification. GEC have supplied a large number of transformers, motors, switchgear and pumpsets to help make the 'Grow More Food' campaign a success.

In all these developments one factor remains unchanged—the GEC quality. Installed at India's farms, GEC quality products are helping to bring the country closer to agricultural self-sufficiency and farm prosperity. No wonder, they have become the most trusted weapons in the country's fight against hunger.

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